



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Salem District Office
1717 Fabry Rd. S.E.
Salem, Oregon 97306
www.or.blm.gov

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1794 (084)

December 7, 2001

Dear Interested Citizen:

The Cascades Resource Area of the Salem District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) that will be used for land acquisitions within the Sandy River watershed. This EA will only cover land acquisitions through fee title purchase or donation and will not cover any land exchanges within the project area. The BLM and its partners have embarked on a cooperative effort to conserve, protect and restore important fish, wildlife, historical and recreational resources within the Sandy River drainage and its tributaries including the Salmon River. Natural, scenic and recreational values associated with the Sandy and Salmon Rivers were recognized by State Scenic Waterway designation of the lower Sandy in 1972, and National Wild and Scenic River designation of the upper and lower Sandy River and Salmon Rivers in 1988. In late 1996, a portion of the middle Sandy River drainage within the scenic Mt. Hood Corridor was protected by Congressional designation.

The BLM shares many general management goals with the state, counties, regional and local governments, Forest Service, and interested organizations in preserving the high quality of life in this area through the conservation and restoration of the Sandy River's natural resources including protection and enhancement of water quality, wildlife and fish habitat, recreation opportunities, scenery and open space.

Acquisition opportunities will be pursued within the Sandy Basin between Dabney State Park downstream and the National Forest boundary upstream. Most of the opportunities exist within the Middle Sandy River which extends from the confluence of the Salmon River with the Sandy near Brightwood, Oregon downstream for nearly 20 miles to the confluence with the Bull Run River near Dodge Park. See an attached map. This portion of the river was found to be eligible as a National Wild and Scenic River due to its outstanding scenery and its critical importance for anadromous fish runs, but was not designated. Riverside lands within this segment of the project area are primarily in private and Portland General Electric (PGE) ownership with scattered publicly owned parcels of BLM and Clackamas County lands.

This middle river segment offers the BLM and our partners the greatest potential for acquisition of lands with very high resource values that would benefit the health of the Sandy River watershed as well as provide needed public access and protection of the scenic viewshed. Land acquisitions would help consolidate public ownership, providing more efficient management of scattered BLM lands. A number of key landowners have already expressed an interest in transferring their lands into public ownership through exchange, donation or acquisition. BLM

would actively pursue willing seller acquisitions in cooperation with the River Conservancy and other interested organizations and individuals.

The BLM proposes to manage the lands with an emphasis of conserving or restoring natural resource values. Sites would be prioritized for restoration and low impact recreation opportunities and projects would only be undertaken with existing budgets or with assistance from outside partners. Restoration projects would be prioritized based on resource and funding opportunities with an emphasis on restoring fish habitat and improving water quality.

Information from you and other members of the public along with resource capabilities, laws and regulations and current available technology will further guide the development of the project proposal. The proposal will then be assessed for environmental effects by an interdisciplinary team consisting of resource specialists. The team will consider known natural and human resources along with public comments.

I would appreciate your thoughts on this proposed project and request that your comments reach this office by January 12, 2002 to facilitate planning. Please include any resource information that might be important to analyze potential environmental effects and identify public issues or concerns. These comments will assist the interdisciplinary team in designing the project and assessing the environmental effects. Early input by you will ensure consideration of your concerns throughout the planning, environmental assessment (EA), and decision-making process.

If you would like to meet with us or obtain more information on the proposed project please contact me at (503) 375-5687. Written comments may be sent to Richard Prather, Cascades Resource Area Manager, Salem District, Bureau of Land Management, 1717 Fabry Rd. SE, Salem, Oregon 97306.

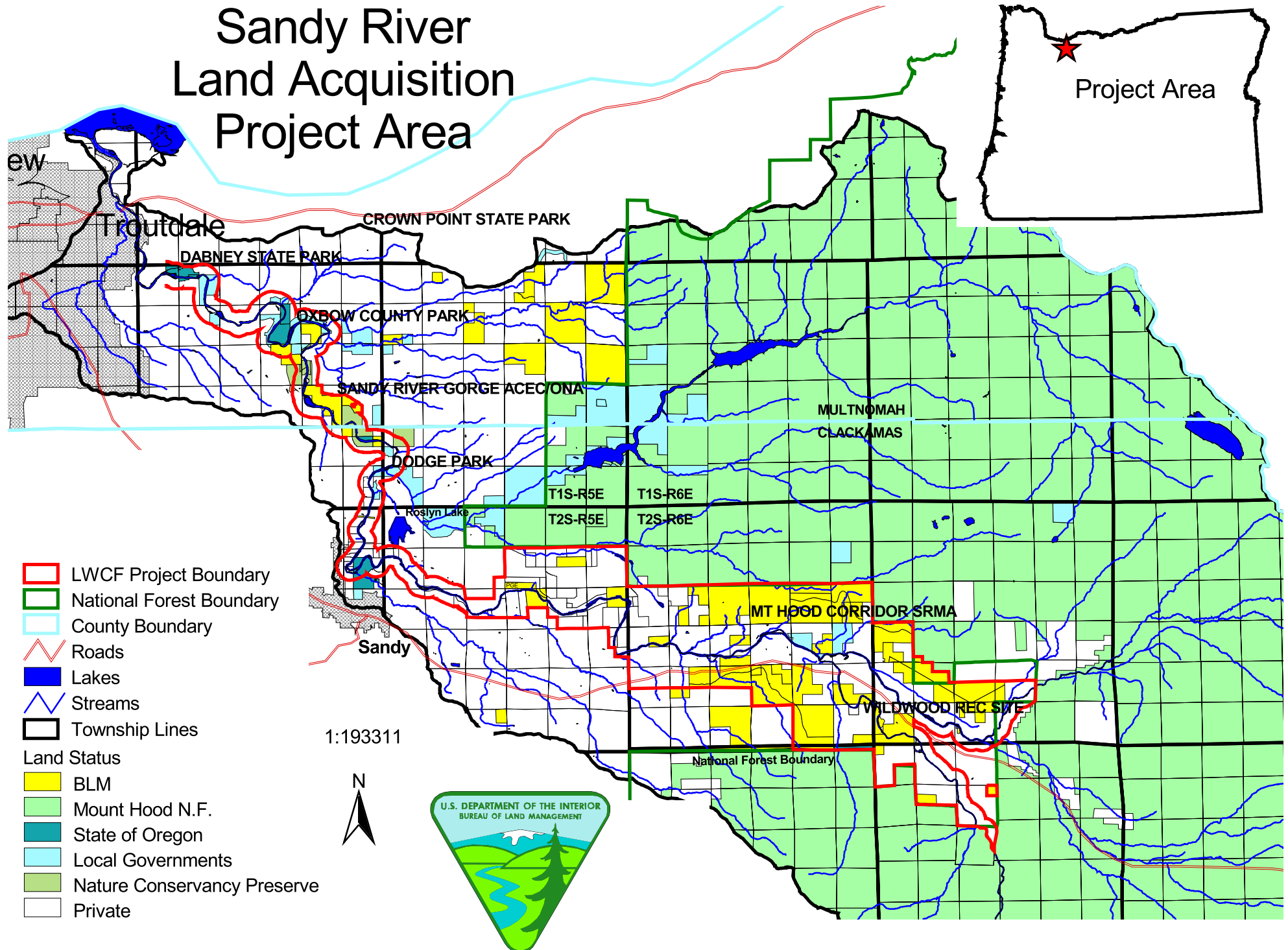
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Barbara Raible", is displayed on a light green rectangular background.

Barbara Raible, Ecologist
Cascades Resource Area

Enclosure
Map

Sandy River Land Acquisition Project Area



December 10, 2001